



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

# THE CONNOISSEUR.

VOL. I.

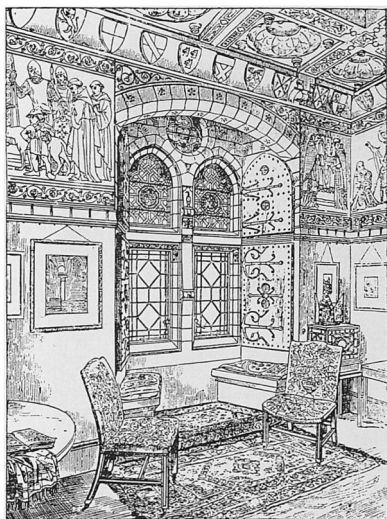
SPRING, 1887.

No. 3.

## RECENT ENGLISH ARCHITECTURE.

*From a French Point of View.*

BY PAUL SÉDILLE.

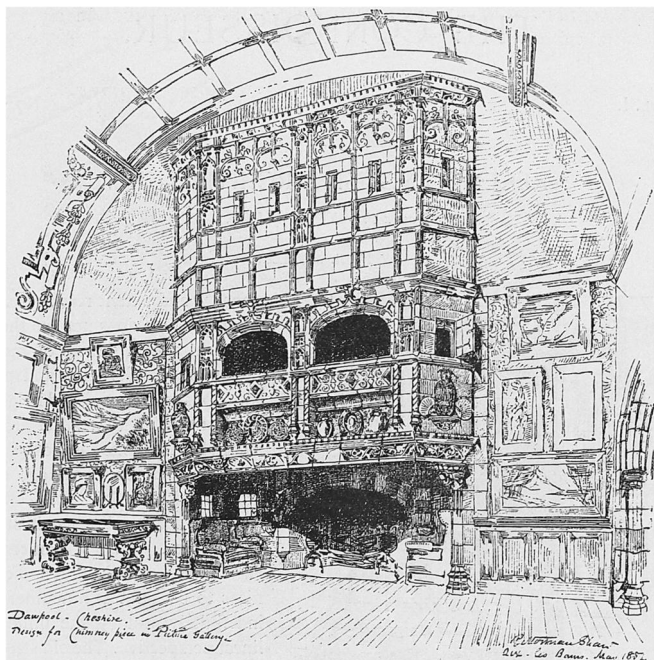


ROOM IN CARDIFF CASTLE. WM. BURGESS, A. R. A., ARCHITECT.

AN excellent idea of the unsettled and prolific period of English Architecture about the middle of the century may be obtained by traversing the streets of London. The commercial and industrial prosperity of England at this time substituted, in the place of old houses, a succession of new buildings, stores, offices, docks, etc., whose

elegance and extent readily excite surprise. One does not see there the right-angled streets of modern Paris, with its clean and elegant houses, of diminished height, and confined within strict architectural limitations, imposed by laws which a short time ago did not permit the least projection from the walls or line established for the roof. The Parisian regulations required balconies and cornices to be built in a manner to indefinitely prolong the uniform linear perspective. The old streets of London, scarcely changed from their original windings, are bordered by buildings quite independent of one another, whose different height and marked projections are limited only by the respect due to the rights and convenience of others. What constantly

changing views in this busy hive of workers! The line of perspective is undulating and broken; the cornices and ornamental parts project; the roofs rise in the form of gables, towers, and cupolas. Attic-windows of all shapes and sizes crown the façades, and form with the ornamental chimney-tops a constantly broken outline, so that Lon-



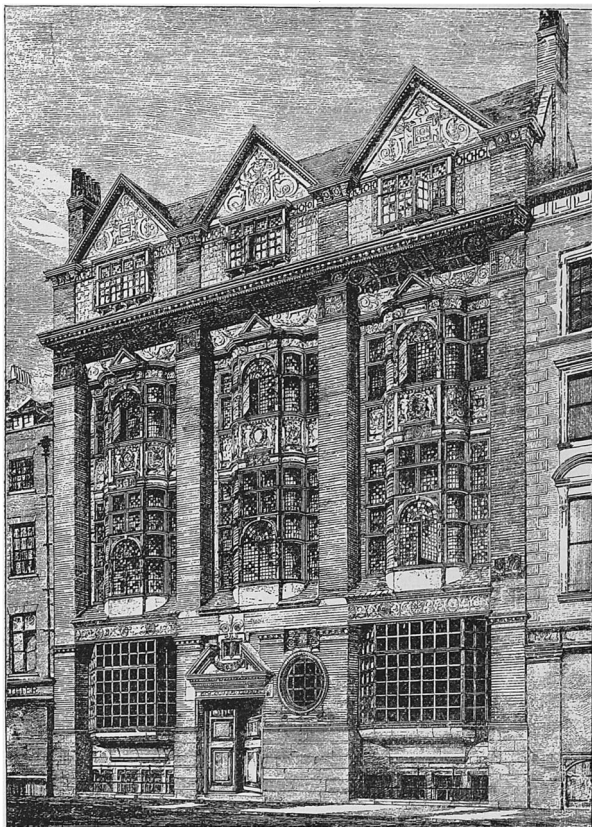
CHIMNEY-PIECE IN PICTURE-GALLERY AT DAWPOOL, CHESHIRE, BY R. NORMAN SHAW, R. A.

don has the appearance of a very old town renewing its youth by fresh decorations.

Nearly all the recent structures, built in ancient style,—including those in the “Queen Anne” mode, which aims more at the refashioning of old houses,—contribute much toward preserving to London its specially antique character. Around the somber and colossal Church of Saint Paul’s are grouped in an odd assemblage, full of contrasts, Roman, Gothic, Venetian, and Florentine buildings, which alternate with the old classical structures of the beginning

of the century, and the rich old edifices of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, commanded by the fantastic bell-fries of Wren’s numerous churches. Here and there are some most execrable attempts on the neo-Greek style; but they are lost in the mass of robust and solidly built structures, which give a flattering impression of the financial resources of the city merchants. Property is so high in the central parts of the city that the cost of a luxurious building is very little, when compared with the price of the ground.

Not only on the principal streets, but



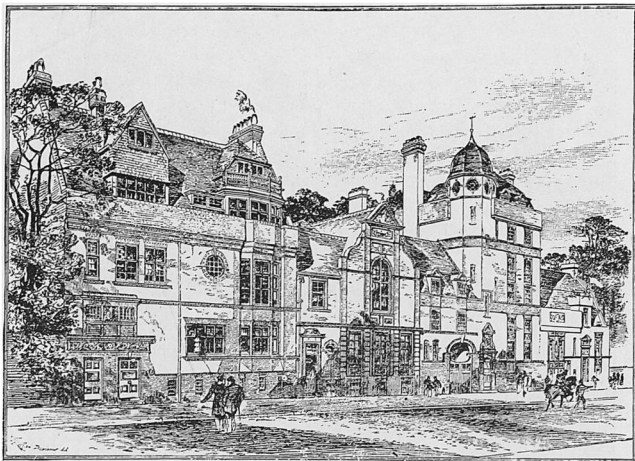
NEW ZEALAND CHAMBERS, LONDON. R. NORMAN SHAW, ARCHITECT.

in narrow courts, elegant façades rear themselves, in the construction of which the richest and most durable materials seemed to have been employed. In the first rank are the red and green Scotch granites, which appear in columns of all sizes, in pilasters, trimmings, and bases of enduring polish ;

then come the sandstones,—sometimes the soft stone of Caën,—the white Portland stone, Bath stone, and the yellow sandstone of Mansfield, combined with brick ; after these, the terra cotta—sometimes enameled bricks and mosaics ; also wood, skillfully carved, without counting metals, although iron,

strange to relate, forms one of the least elements of construction in English cities. Thus a variety of forms as well

structions are intelligently arranged with regard to utility, and the different materials which modern industry puts



ARTISTS' HOUSES AT CHELSEA. E. W. GODWIN, F. S. A., AND R. W. EDIS, ARCHITECTS.

as varied colors complete the picturesque spectacle of the London streets.

It is not pretended that all this eclectic architecture of the last thirty or forty years is perfect. Far from it! In London, as well as elsewhere, there is a style of building without taste and without scruple; but there is really little of this character to be found in the mass of honestly and luxuriously constructed houses, for it is only just to accord all praise to the excellent methods of English builders and to the conscientious skill of their workmen. Although the houses for commerce, banks, and insurance companies and all sorts of societies, industrial and otherwise, sacrifice much to outward appearance, which method may, after all, yield a liberal return, the con-

at the service of the builder are often employed with an honesty and boldness extremely gratifying after the routine methods habitually followed in such cases.

Happily for their architecture, the English have not had an abundance of soft stone and plaster at their disposal. It is true that the French soft stones, by the size of the blocks and the softness and fineness of the grain, lend themselves to the most delicate sculpture and to the most fanciful inventions of the constructor; but, cut in pieces of every dimension, they are piled one upon the other in large surfaces, which are at last finished in stone, and a monumental structure thus appears, whose easily concealed foundation has not been too carefully considered. While

the use of plaster may be desirable for light work, it too often serves to conceal under its fragile glazing the poverty of materials and their improper employment. It is not thus in England. Stone, being rare and costly, is employed in large quantities only on monuments; for ordinary use, it is sparingly employed. Thus, a little stone for the sculptural parts, hard stones of small dimensions for the principal foundations, and above all red brick with its natural complements, ornamental plaques, enamels, etc.,—these are the elements ordinarily at the disposal of English constructors. They carefully study the different combinations which serve to enhance architectural beauty.

The appearance of the large English towns is similar to that of London.

It is true that the Royal Exchange and Free Trade Hall buildings in classical style are very inferior works. At Birmingham, a gayer and more elegant city than Manchester, the Gothic style is more agreeable. The School of Design in Edmund street and the Mason College are pretty combinations of brick and stone.

At Liverpool architecture has taken a powerful stride. The classical style is represented by a beautiful monument, St. George's Hall. This is a Corinthian edifice, which incloses a vast hall for musical entertainments. Finished in 1855, it does honor to the late H. L. Elmes, who made the plan. But the Gothic is, nevertheless, well represented at Liverpool, and seems to retain popular favor.

At Edinburgh the modern taste for



OLD HOUSE AT MAIDSTONE, RECENTLY DEMOLISHED.

At Manchester the modern Gothic shows to advantage in the Assize Courts and Town Hall of Waterhouse.

the Moyen Âge has erected numerous edifices, whose picturesque forms are in beautiful accord with the somber

masses of the old town. At Glasgow there are strong buildings with all the Gothic munitions, which astonish the traveler by their fortress-like air. The taste for the Moyaen Age in the cities nearer London is not less pronounced. At Bristol there is a shade of difference, for the Roman has precedence over

ings, constructed under the impulse of great works undertaken in London.

What is the "Queen Anne" style, which has obtained the favor of the English? This is as difficult to explain as is every arbitrary fashion.

From the time of "Queen Anne," whose reign lasted but a brief period,



DINING-ROOM FIRE-PLACE IN COUNTRY HOUSE OF SIR W. ARMSTRONG. R. NORMAN SHAW, R. A., ARCHITECT.

the Gothic. It is true that Bristol possesses some beautiful remains, which are well-preserved specimens of Norman architecture; and the local architects were, without doubt, inspired by these. The cities in the south of England, changed and enlarged, contain a number of secular and religious build-

ings between the years 1702 and 1714, all public buildings were constructed in the classical Italian style, according to the absolute formulas of Vignole and Palladio. The architecture of private houses was reduced to the most modest decorative elements. The brick façades were simply ornamented with

classical details, window-sashes, pilasters, cornices, and frontals often of wood and painted white; in fact, a red mass relieved by some white ornamentation, whose architecture was only a simplified form of the Dutch style, brought to England by William III. There are still in London and in the counties numerous samples, preserved intact, of the simple architecture, which is sometimes poor in appearance, but whose modest form is suitable as a dwelling, and forms the logical frame of English home life, so unobtrusive in its interior.

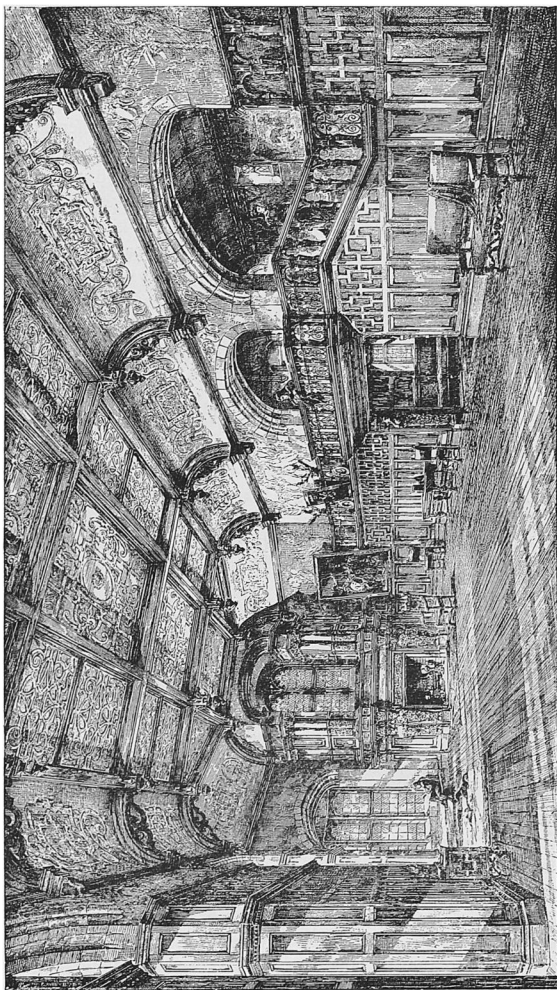
But how was the Gothic, which a short time ago was the rage in England, so rapidly and completely supplanted by an architecture which at first seems to offer so few resources to its imitators?

This quick transformation of taste was produced by a sudden change of fashion, which the steadfast traditions of art were not able to stem. In England, there is no official art instruction, having for its mission the defense and propagation of certain artistic principles, whose application and transmission form what in France is called a school. The old system of apprenticeship still exists in England; young architects receiving their training from an employer who, on his side working independently, is subject to reverses through the withdrawal of public favor. Hence the fluctuation and eclecticism, which gain ground more rapidly in England than in France, protected as French students are from too fantastic wanderings by the instruction obtained at the *École des Beaux Arts*. It follows that English architects are more practical than theoretical, which peculiarity fits them for the careful methods of construction and

arrangement which characterize English houses. The "Queen Anne" reaction was largely the result of the abuse of the Gothic style. The nation had become tired of fortress-like houses, in the heavy, somber "castellated" style, which imprisoned them in gloomy interiors in place of offering to them the pleasant quiet of a cheerful home.

English poets and writers, also, after having sung the praises of the Moyen Âge, its arts and monuments, were seized with a spasm of affection for the softer manners of the eighteenth century and for the pleasanter architecture of the same epoch. Thackeray and his daughter, in particular, dwelt in their romances on the customs, tastes, and art of this time. Thackeray's house, which he had built in his favorite "Queen Anne" style, is to be seen in Kensington Palace Gardens. This simple and distinguished house, having about it an atmosphere of classical savor, was without doubt the first constructed in London in the style which was soon to invade everything. Philip Webb, an able architect, toward 1861 constructed at Upton, near Bexley (Kent), another house, in the same style, for the poet William Morris. This house is not in the "Queen Anne" style of to-day. It is entirely of brick, and Gothic in general appearance, notwithstanding the sash windows and a tile roof. Morris painted and decorated the interior himself. The decoration relates particularly to the fourteenth century, which a revived admiration for Dante and Petrarch and the old classical poets had restored to favor. William Morris, distinguished poet as well as learned chemist, painter on glass, manufacturer of hangings and decorative papers, largely contributed, in company with a group of artists, who worked





SALON — PADDOCKHURST, SUSSEX. ARTHUR CAYSTON, ARCHITECT.

in common, toward the transformation of interior ornamentation and furniture in order to harmonize them with the new style. Their sympathies were divided between the "Queen Anne" style and Italian pre-Raphaelitism, of which they were to be the first apostles.

The first structures were only isolated efforts; it devolved upon R. Norman Shaw and Wm. Eden Nesfield, associates in work, to develop the tendencies and confirm the new style in works of a marked character. In 1864 R. Norman Shaw, charged with the restoration and enlargement of a house in Kent, followed the style of the ancient and modest structures of the country, rejecting the Gothic forms, which he had hitherto used. He abandoned arches and ogives for rectangular windows with square panes set in lead, and covered these structures with the tiles of the country. This was apparently a little thing, but it was the beginning of a revolution, a return to simpler forms in opposition to the useless complications and pretentious ostentation of the neo-Gothic, then grown old.

In 1867 Mr. Nesfield, constructing a house at Kimmell, gave to his home the character of the galleries at Hampton Court, fronting on the garden and Fountain Court. Nesfield also returned to the forgotten system of sash windows, subdivided into square panes by large sash-bars.

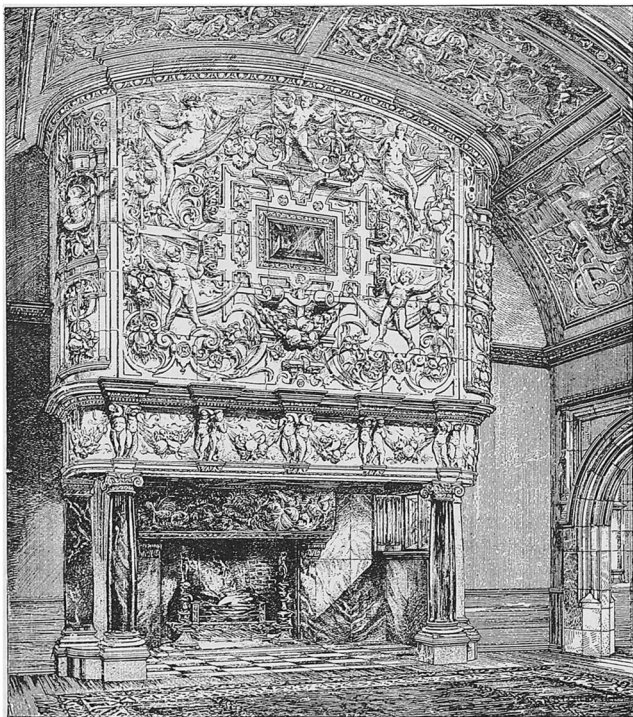
This extremely English and practical window, called a guillotine in France, and wrongly despised there, was necessarily abandoned during the neo-Gothic period, on account of the adoption of forms with which it would not accord.

A year later W. Nesfield built a

small lodge at the entrance of Regent's Park. This completed the revolution already commenced, and transformed the architecture of city and country houses by offering a new prototype as model. It would be impossible to too highly commend the style of this diminutive structure, whose fanciful and picturesque character insensibly invited the imitation of nearly all English architects.

To those who were astonished to see R. Norman Shaw and William Nesfield lay aside their *Moyen Âge* models for an architecture which seemed only a repetition of a nearer past, these architects responded:

"We do not copy, we aim to do modern work by simply continuing our local architecture, which has been neglected too long for a retrogression toward *Moyen Âge* forms. Has the modern Gothic fulfilled its promise? We expected an exhibition of logic and truthfulness, but after a long experience the imitators of the *Moyen Âge* have demonstrated that they were capable of as much false Gothic as was produced at the beginning of the century by the erection of antique colonnades and false stucco temples. Forms and modes of construction have been borrowed from the Gothic, which have no reason for existing now that the resources at our command are so much increased; forms have been falsified, and under pretext of making the construction prominent; puerile and superfluous expedients have been resorted to, even to the accentuation of false structures. Moreover, in place of adhering to the simple and modest forms of the *Moyen Âge*, all decorative elements of grand edifices have been borrowed in order to apply them in deplorable abundance to our domestic architecture. For instance, elements on a church scale are incongruous when applied in smaller proportions to a house. It is the same with certain forms of construction, which should be employed only when they are in accord with the ornamentation and dimensions. It will soon be fifty years since Pugin endeavored to familiarize our workmen and their patrons with the forms and manner of procedure of the *Moyen Âge*. Since then hundreds of churches and



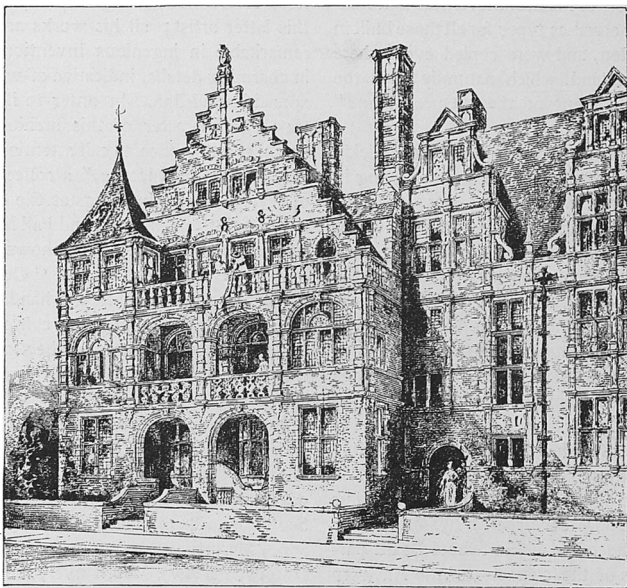
FIRE-PLACE BY R. NORMAN SHAW, R. A.

buildings in this style have been erected, special museums have been opened for the study of the relics of the past, but, notwithstanding so many efforts to reintroduce the Gothic among us, whenever the workers and master builders are left to themselves they invariably return to the old English classic style. Thousands of houses in the ancient local styles continue to spring up around London. Is it not in execrable taste to see our modern Gothic houses furnished in an altogether different style, however suited the furnishings may be to our manners and needs? Let us then cease this useless struggle, take up our national traditions where we abandoned them, follow more recent styles, in harmony with our present manners. Perhaps they have

no great artistic value, but we can address ourselves to changing them for the better."

It was in consequence of these ideas that Mr. Shaw constructed in 1872, in Leadenhall street, a typical house known as the "New Zealand Chambers."

Inspired by the old eighteenth-century buildings which stood in the suburbs, he produced a very original work, which has often been imitated in principle and detail. In the construction of this house, Mr. Shaw seems to have



LONDON HOUSE—COLLINGHAM GARDENS. ERNEST GEORGE AND PETO, ARCHITECTS.

been animated by the remembrance of a pretty house at Ipswich, dated 1567, known under the name of "Sparrow's House." It will be remarked in the illustration of this work how the architect, prevented from building beyond the house line, managed to build a little back—in the space between the brick piles, which form the principal part of the façade—two stories of bow windows. These large openings, which characterize ancient English architecture, diffuse a good light indoors and afford side views, while preserving the character of the façade undisturbed.

Peculiar circumstances favored the development of the new style, thus inaugurated by Nesfield and Shaw. Toward 1870 J. J. Stevenson, an Edin-

burgh architect, established himself in London. He had had the opportunity to study the Scottish baronial style,—a style of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, in which classical details ornament picturesque Gothic houses as they did in the early days of the French Renaissance.

Associated with Mr. Robson, architect of the School Board, Mr. Stevenson had occasion to construct a large number of schools in London.

In this partnership the taste of Mr. Stevenson is dominant. Appreciating the advantages to be derived from the abundant brick of London, he naturally inclined toward the art of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, with which he was so well acquainted. The

schools of Messrs. Stevenson and Robson served as types for all those built in London, and were copied everywhere in England, which naturally aided the development of the "Queen Anne" style.

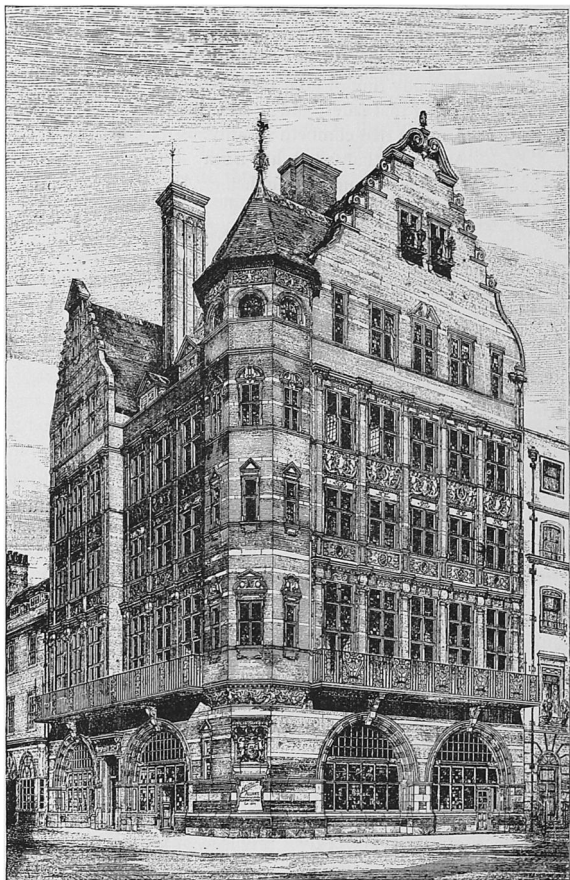
This mode was, however, quickly transformed, and the style reigning in England to-day could not easily be traced to the queen to whom it owes its name. Its original elements could with difficulty be connected with the many-sided, capricious and charming art which enlivens the towns and villages of England with its red tones. The actual style is enriched by methods adopted from the architecture of the Low Countries, and has drawn from the borders of the Loire and the hills of Normandy something of the elegance and grace of the sixteenth century. Thus the edifice constructed by Mr. Bodley for the office of the School Board partakes of the character of the Antwerp buildings, the chateaux of Chambord, Chenonceaux, and even the houses at Caën, from which they borrow the style of high garret windows. This is not the real "Queen Anne" style, and yet, for want of another appellation, we are reduced to uniting under this head the greater part of English architecture. Some have proposed to call it "Free Classic" or "Stuart style," which embraces a larger period, and is in consequence less determined; but the term "Queen Anne" seems to remain in favor, and we are forced to accept it, although it may not be sufficiently explicit.

Nesfield and Shaw have been the most influential promoters of this style. It would be impossible to enumerate the private architectural works which

have established the high reputation of this latter artist; all his works are as remarkable in ingenious invention as in charming details, indicative of widespread knowledge. In order to illustrate the character of this architect's work, it will suffice to call attention to his "Albert Hall House," a collection of several-storied buildings at the corner of Saint James street and Pall Mall. (Illustration, page 13.) This shows the development of the modest "Queen Anne" of olden time, in the hands of an artist skillful in clothing compositions, conceived often under the picturesque influence of the Moyen Âge, in classic forms.

After Shaw must be mentioned the architects who practiced and still practice the "Queen Anne" with great success under diverse aspects,—Gilbert Scott, Jr., Champneys, Colcutt, Jackson, Macartney, Newton, and Prior (pupils of Shaw), May, Tarver, and Ernest George and Peto, who have filled the English villages and the new quarters of London on the Kensington and West Brompton sides with their coquettish creations.

The "Queen Anne" is in reality Flemish architecture, brick and stone with projecting gables, but skillfully arranged and adapted to English plans with the English style of prominent bow-windows, steps, and little porches, garret-windows and high chimney-tops, which surmount the red-tiled roofs. This style was at first applied to immense buildings massed together and almost majestic in their grandeur, while now quite small houses, which stand apart or are collected together in an infinite variety of forms, are known as "Queen Anne" dwellings.



CORNER PALL MALL AND ST. JAMES ST., LONDON. R. NORMAN SHAW, R. A., ARCHITECT.